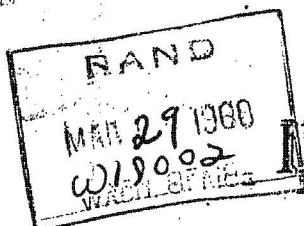


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INTERROGATION REPORT

to Tom Edwards

THIS REPORT IS THE RESULT OF THE INTERROGATION ACTIVITY CONDUCTED BY THE NATIONAL INTERROGATION CENTER (NIC) UNDER THE JOINT AUSPICES OF THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE ORGANIZATION (CIO) AND THE U.S. CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY (CIA) WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF DETACHMENT 6, 6499TH SPECIAL ACTIVITIES GROUP (USAF).

COUNTRY	: SOUTH VIETNAM (SVN) NORTH VIETNAM (NVN) LAOS	NIC REPORT NO	: 099/68
SUBJECT	: Reaction to Infiltration	NIC CASE NO	: FET
DATE OF INFO	: December 1967	DATE OF REPORT	: 26/1/68
DATE AND PLACE OF ACQUISITION	: 15 January 1968 (I-U) DANANG, QUANG NAM	NO. OF PAGES	: 3
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This report was collected by a NIC Field Exploitation Team on 14 January 1968 in DANANG Municipality SVN. Source is not available at the NIC for further exploitation.

SOURCE:

SUMMARY

3.3(h)(2)

In preparation for infiltration in April 1967, Source received political indoctrination that emphasized the poorness of U.S. combat techniques and told the soldiers to remain as close as possible to the U.S. troops in order to avoid bombings and shellings. Cadres said that four-fifths of SVN had been liberated and Source's unit would probably not have to fight at all, because a few units infiltrated had not had to be used in combat yet. The cadres said that the death ratio in NVA/VC units in SVN was extremely low and even in large victories suffered few casualties. Source's unit would

3.3(h)(2)

only called to the battlefield when necessary. During infiltration, the heavy load and sickness was Source's major complaint. During infiltration he read GVN leaflets secretly and was strongly affected by one that showed an NVA corpse outside DUC CO Post; he thought he had been deceived by the NVN Government. Food and medicine were also in short supply on the trip.

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1. Beginning from the day he received the pre-infiltration course [redacted] 3.3(h)(2)
[redacted] Source knew for sure that he would be sent to SVN. He felt that it was his fate. He became hesitant and undecided whether or not he should ask his superiors to allow him to stay in NVN, because if he insisted his rice ration would surely be cut.
2. After the completion of the pre-infiltration course, he was allowed to go on leave for 15 days to visit his family. Like the other men, he was free to inform his family of his coming departure for SVN, if he wished. Source was sad and never wanted to let his aged parents know about his departure, however, since he realized that this was probably the last time he would see them, one day before he returned to his unit, he informed them of the infiltration. Upon learning this, Source's mother [redacted] cried 3.3(h)(2)
bitterly, whereas his father remained quiet. Source said that his parents also regretfully accepted his departure as inevitable.
3. The infiltration was thoroughly prepared ahead of time. Throughout the period of the pre-infiltration course, company and battalion cadres ceaselessly built up their troops' morale. In all political indoctrination sessions, they would never miss telling the soldiers that the U.S. combat techniques were very poor and the U.S. soldiers were not well-seasoned, the only thing they needed to do during the action was to manage to stay as close to U.S. elements as possible, then U.S. bombings and shellings would hardly harm them. Cadres said that four-fifths of SVN had been liberated, and probably Source's unit would not have to fight at all, because a few infiltrated units so far had never been used in combat. They explained that the percentage of death of NVA/VC Units in SVN was extremely low, sometimes those units had large victories and yet suffered very minor casualties. Consequently, according to the cadres, Source's unit would [redacted] 3.3(h)(2)
only called to the battlefield when very necessary.
4. On the infiltration route, the first hardship he experienced was the heavy load of about 22 kilos, which he had to carry all the way to SVN. During the practice of carrying heavy loads prior to the infiltration, Source never really tried. The same as the others, he would throw off some stones from his basket so that he would not get tired. He never thought he would have to carry heavy things a very long way, but when he was put to the actual task, he felt as if he had been tortured terribly, especially when he climbed a slippery hill. Then, beginning [redacted] in Laos, he as well as the 3.3(h)(2)
other infiltrators were no longer issued canned food and they had to eat dried food [redacted] as instructed. [redacted] 3.3(h)(2)
[redacted] He was exhausted but still tried to follow his unit, because there was no place for him to stay in Laos. At that time, he thought that he would be dead in the jungle, but he survived to continue his way to SVN.
5. Source noticed that during the infiltration, [redacted] 3.3(h)(2)
the others were still able to catch up the Group. Fortunately, his unit was not bombed or ambushed. Source used to read GVN leaflets secretly, and one of them very strongly affected him. This was the one with a young NVA soldier lying dead within the fence of DUC CO post; on the back of the leaflet was the deceased soldier's letter to his aged mother written in prose. He thought that he was deceived by the NVN Government to liberate the SVN people who were really living in happiness; that green fields and scenes in SVN were too beautiful to be smeared with blood because of the foolish liberation; that he had seen gentle and beloved mothers in SVN just like his mother in NVN, and he could not understand why a bloody liberation by the NVN Government was so necessary.

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6. In addition to psychological effects, Source found that his living conditions were not pleasant at all. According to daily rations, each man was supposed to receive 700 grams of rice but actually each would receive about 500 or 600 grams of poor-grade rice only. They had no other food to eat with the rice, except that they tried to prepare some sort of salty soup so that they could fill their stomachs. In some areas, they could not even find consumable wild vegetables to make soup. Medicine was in short supply; only the seriously sick were issued medicine, whereas those who were not really sick never hoped to get even vitamins but they were allowed to rest and stay in the unit quartering location.
7. Source said that he could judge his comrades' reactions through their bold words. Previously while in NVN they did not know the situation very well, but since they arrived in SVN, Source strongly believed that they could use their judgement properly, although the majority of them are very young, from 17 to 23. Some openly said that they would not believe anything until they saw or received the things they had been promised.
8. Source noticed that desertions took place only in NVN. As they entered into Laos, there were no more deserters, because from there it would be a real problem for them to go back to NVN, if they wished to desert. Measures against desertion were applied by taking away 300 grams of seasoning powder from the soldiers (the amount of seasoning powder each soldier was issued before the infiltration), because with this seasoning powder he could sell it for 60 NVN piastres which was enough for him to spend on the way back to his native village (if he was still in NVN); and by entrusting the reliable men to guard the others.
9. Before arriving in Laos, Source had little hope that he would be able to return to NVN, because he met a few hard-core cadres on the infiltration route and was told that the cadres ranking from Assistant Platoon Leader and higher would be allowed to return to NVN, after they had turned over the soldiers to combat units in SVN. However, when arriving in Laos he met some other cadres who told him that after 2 September 1967 this was no longer happening.
10. Speaking of the treatment of local people, Source said that his infiltration group did not go through any populated area in SVN, but in NVN the treatment given by the people to the troops appeared to be indifferent, probably because they had received too many infiltration groups already and worse still in some areas, because the villagers tried to steal things from the troops. Source said that this resulted from the hard life which the NVN people, especially those living in MRA, had borne.

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